

Sketch

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Article 9

Medicine Mask

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Preliminaries accomplished, Dr. Jensen stepped forward, turned the machine on and then inserted the white tape into the small slot. Silently the machine digested the four-word question and then began its work. A loud hum startled viewers, but the scientists nodded knowingly to one another. Unconcerned, Dr. Jensen reached forward to press the anti-loop control, but stepped back in amazement as the machine reversed itself. The silence continued, scientists eyed their watches; way beyond the usual ten or fifteen thousand millisecond range, still the silence continued.

Noisily the printer began chattering to itself. Quickly Dr. Jensen tore the yellow answer tape from its roll, mentally translating the answer to himself. "There was no god," . . . his knees were firm, his mind was blank, yet his eyes continued, "but there is one now." He stood woodenly, his back to the cameras. Quickly his disbelieving mind reread the incomprehensible reply. Suddenly his steel grey eyes lifted to face his machine and with a sudden urgency he reached forward to press the red emergency stop control.

All the audience saw was a large blue arc which jumped from the PRODIGY and left Dr. Jensen's body lying on the white tile floor. A second spark flashed on the yellow answer tape which began to burn. Finally the small flame flickered and then died as mankind crossed itself and waited.

Milo Schield, Sci. & H. Soph.



Medicine Mask

This grotesque and twisted plaque
Hangs upon the wall
Of carved and painted wood
Serving no seeming good.
Dust always seems to collect
In folds too hard to clean,
And cobwebs often add
A certain aging sheen.

The snake encircled eyes,
The convulsed horse-tooth scoff
Look too proud to ask
For just a brushing off.
While some raptly polish their masks
And never see them at all,
I find less work in hanging
My mask upon the wall.

James Wickliff, Sc. & H. Grad.

The Direction

Knowing the direction from before
When, with sincere callousness,
Those who loved me turned me away,
Does not help now.
I look back with hunger,
Longing to be with their love and laughter —
To hold them close.

Resolved in independence
I strive, I strain, I stall.
I fan thick volumes
And thumb precious pages
For help.
Yet I cannot hide from those around me —
The accusing stares,
The bony fingers yet point
The direction.

At the point of parting
When the final severance is made,
Can I say in selfless pride;
Having stabbed with a stubby finger
In blind decision at this place,
From here on I go forward.

James Wickliff, Sc. & H. Grad.